

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for assembling a blood treatment circuit by aseptically connecting a connected bag set, which has previously been sterilized, and a filter unit, which has previously been sterilized, to each other, said connected bag set being composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a secondary bag holding blood or blood components and a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bag, said filter unit having an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from a fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube, both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet, wherein said method comprises: ~~a step of~~

cutting said first tube so that the first tube comprises first and second cut ends;

cutting said second tube so that the second tube comprises first and second cut ends;

aseptically connecting said first cut end of said first tube to said first cut end of said second tube and aseptically connecting said second cut end of said first tube to said second cut end of said second tube ~~by using an apparatus for aseptically connecting tubes,~~ thereby placing said filter unit along said first tube.

2. (Currently Amended) A method for assembling a blood treatment circuit, said method comprising ~~the steps of:~~

sterilizing a connected bag set which is composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a secondary bag holding blood or blood components and a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bag;

sterilizing a filter unit having an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from a fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube, both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet; and

cutting said first tube so that the first tube comprises first and second cut ends;

cutting said second tube so that the second tube comprises first and second cut ends;

aseptically connecting said first cut end of said first tube to said first cut end of said second tube and aseptically connecting said second cut end of said first tube to said second cut end of said second tube ~~by using an apparatus for aseptically connecting tubes,~~ thereby placing said filter unit along said first tube.

3. (Currently Amended) A method for assembling a blood treatment circuit by aseptically connecting a connected bag set, which has previously been sterilized, and a filter unit, which has previously been sterilized, to each other, said connected bag set being composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a plurality of secondary bags holding blood or blood components and a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bags and a third tube to connect said secondary bags to one another, said filter unit having an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from a fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube, both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet, wherein said method comprises: ~~a step of~~

cutting said second tube so that the second tube comprises first and second cut ends;

cutting said third tube so that the third tube comprises first and second cut ends;

aseptically connecting said first cut end of said third tube to said first cut end of said second tube, and aseptically connecting said second cut end of said third tube to said second cut end of said second tube ~~by using an apparatus for aseptically connecting tubes~~, thereby placing said filter unit along said third tube.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for assembling a blood treatment circuit, said method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

sterilizing a connected bag set which is composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a plurality of secondary bags holding blood or blood components, a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bags, and a third tube that connects said secondary bags to one another;

sterilizing a filter unit having an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from a fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet; and

cutting said second tube so that the second tube comprises first and second cut ends;

cutting said third tube so that the third tube comprises first and second cut ends;

aseptically connecting said first cut end of said third tube to said first cut end of said second tube, and aseptically connecting said second cut end of said third tube to said second cut end of said second tube ~~by using an apparatus for aseptically connecting tubes~~, thereby placing said filter unit along said third tube.

5. (Original) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 1, wherein said first tube and/or said second tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection.

6 (Original) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 2, wherein said first tube and/or said second tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection.

7. (Original) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 3, wherein said second tube and/or said third tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection.

8. (Original) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 4, wherein said second tube and/or said third tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection.

9. (Previously Presented) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 5, wherein said mark indicates the direction of flow of fluid in the tube.

10. (Currently Amended) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 1, wherein said first and second tubes each have a ~~tube has an additional~~ mark indicating that the first and second tubes have been correctly connected to each other.

11. (Currently Amended) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 10, wherein said ~~additional~~ marks on the first and second tubes are ~~formed by expanding the~~ comprised of an expanded outside diameter of the first and second tubes tube.

12. (Previously Presented) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 1, wherein said connected bag set and said filter unit are sterilized in different manners or under different conditions.

13. (Original) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 12, wherein said connected bag set is sterilized by moist heat sterilization and said filter unit is sterilized by gas sterilization or radiation sterilization.

14. (Currently Amended) A filter unit to be aseptically connected to a connected bag set in order to assemble a blood treatment circuit, said connected bag set having previously been sterilized and being composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a secondary bag holding blood or blood components and a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bag, which comprises said filter unit comprising an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube, both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet, said filter unit being put to use by wherein said first tube is aseptically connected to said second tube by using an apparatus for aseptically connecting tubes, and wherein said apparatus for aseptically connecting said first and second tubes cuts said first and second tubes cutting said tube midway, and then aseptically connects one of said first and second tubes to the other at their cut surfaces, such that one of said cut surfaces of said first tube

facing one direction is connected to one of said cut surfaces of said second tube facing an opposite direction, whereas the other of said cut surfaces of said first tube facing said opposite direction is connected to the other of said cut surfaces of said second tube facing said one direction ~~connecting the cut tube to another tube,~~ thereby placing said filter unit along said first tube.

15. (Currently Amended) The filter unit as defined in Claim 14, wherein said second tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection to said first ~~another~~ tube.

16. (Currently Amended) The filter unit as defined in Claim 15, wherein said mark indicates the direction of flow of fluid in the second tube.

17. (Currently Amended) The filter unit as defined in Claim 14, wherein said second tube has a ~~an additional~~ mark indicating that the second tube has been correctly connected to ~~another~~ the first tube.

18. (Currently Amended) The filter unit as defined in Claim 17, wherein said ~~additional~~ mark is ~~formed by expanding the~~ comprised of an expanded outside diameter of the second tube.

19. (Canceled).

20. (Currently Amended) A filter unit to be aseptically connected to a connected bag set ~~comprising a~~ in order to assemble a blood treatment circuit, said connected bag set

having previously been sterilized and being composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a plurality of secondary bags holding blood or blood components and a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bags and a third tube to connect said secondary bags to one another, said filter unit comprising which comprises an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube, both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet, said filter unit being put to use by wherein said third tube is aseptically connected to said second tube by using an apparatus for aseptically connecting tubes, and wherein said apparatus for aseptically connecting said third and second tubes cuts said third and second tubes cutting said tube midway, and then aseptically connects one of said third and second tubes to the other at their cut surfaces, such that one of said cut surfaces of said third tube facing one direction is connected to one of said cut surfaces of said second tube facing an opposite direction, whereas the other of said cut surfaces of said third tube facing said opposite direction is connected to the other of said cut surfaces of said second tube facing said one direction connecting the cut tube to another tube, wherein said another tube is a tube that connects a plurality of secondary bags to each other, said secondary bags holding blood or blood components, thereby placing said filter unit along said third tube.

21. (Previously Presented) The filter unit as defined in Claim 14, said filter unit having a by-pass tube that goes around said filter medium.

22-25. (Canceled)

26. (New) The filter unit as defined in Claim 20, wherein said second tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection to said third tube.

27. (New) The filter unit as defined in Claim 26, wherein said mark indicates the direction of flow of fluid in the second tube.

28. (New) The filter unit as defined in Claim 20, wherein said second tube has a mark indicating that the second tube has been correctly connected to the third tube.

29. (New) The filter unit as defined in Claim 28, wherein said mark is comprised of an expanded outside diameter of the second tube.

30. (New) The filter unit as defined in Claim 20, said filter unit having a by-pass tube that goes around said filter medium.

31. (New) A filter unit comprising a filter and a tube, the filter possessing an inlet and an outlet, the filter comprising a housing and a filter medium in the housing to remove specific components from fluid introduced through the inlet, the tube comprising a first end connected to the inlet of the filter and a second end connected to the outlet of the filter so that the tube extends between the inlet and outlet of the filter, said tube not being connected to a container between the first and second ends of the tube, and the filter unit being sterilized, the filter unit being adapted to be put to use by cutting the tube between the first and second ends to result in cut ends of the tube and aseptically connecting the cut ends of the tube to another tube.

32. (New) A filter unit as defined in claim 31, further comprising two spaced apart marks on the tube at positions on either side of a location where the tube is to be cut, the two marks being distinguishable from one another.

33. (New) A filter unit as defined in claim 31, wherein a portion of the tube has an expanded outside diameter relative to parts of the tube on both sides of the portion of expanded diameter to indicate correct connection of the tube to the another tube.